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For Immediate Release
June 28, 2013

Navajo President Shelly Ready to Approve Emergency Declaration for Drought Conditions

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said he is ready to sign an emergency declaration regarding drought conditions on the Navajo Nation after an Emergency Commission Meeting approved an emergency declaration.

“We need to help our people right now. We have wells that are dry. We have livestock that are thirsty and crops that are in dire need of water. Declaring this emergency will release emergency funding for chapters to take care of needs they see in their communities,” President Shelly said.

According to tribal precipitation statistics, Western Agency is about 65 percent below normal precipitation amounts this year, while Fort Defiance Agency is about 63 percent below normal. Northern and Eastern Agency are about 55 percent below average, while Chinle Agency is about 30 percent below average precipitation levels.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration officials expect above normal temperatures to continue through the summer months with below average precipitation.

The emergency declaration is being drafted and is expected to be signed soon.

“We are going to do everything we can to ensure that we deal with drought conditions that are consistent with the ramifications of the Navajo government. Also, declaring an emergency will allow us to appeal to President Obama for funding,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly added that everyone needs to help conserve water.

“We are in this together, so we all need to conserve water. Our livestock and crops will be depending on our conservation too,” President Shelly said.

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